

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUN 11 1976

DATE ENTERED 7.8.1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Grand Portage National Monument

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATIONSTREET & NUMBER ON U.S. 61, 38 MILES FROM GRAND MARAIS, MINN.
P.O. Box 666

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Grand Marais

VICINITY OF

8th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Minnesota

27

Cook

0.31

3 CLASSIFICATION**CATEGORY**☒ DISTRICT
☐ BUILDING(S)
☐ STRUCTURE
☐ SITE
☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☒ PUBLIC
☐ PRIVATE
☐ BOTH**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**☐ IN PROCESS
☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED
☐ UNOCCUPIED
☒ WORK IN PROGRESS
ACCESSIBLE
☒ YES: RESTRICTED
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED
☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE
☐ COMMERCIAL
☐ EDUCATIONAL
☐ ENTERTAINMENT
☐ GOVERNMENT
☐ INDUSTRIAL
☐ MILITARY
☒ MUSEUM
☒ PARK
☐ PRIVATE RESIDENCE
☐ RELIGIOUS
☐ SCIENTIFIC
☐ TRANSPORTATION
☐ OTHER:**4 AGENCY**

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: (If applicable)

Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

VICINITY OF

STATE

Nebraska

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

List of Classified Structures

DATE

August 1975

☒ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDSNational Park Service
U. S. Department of the Interior, Midwest Regional Office

CITY, TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

☒ EXCELLENT

☒ GOOD

☒ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED

☒ RUINS

☒ UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED

☒ ALTERED

CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE

☐ MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Grand Portage was designated a national historic site in 1951. Nine years later Congress established Grand Portage National Monument. The monument includes the sites of the North West Company's Fur Trading post on Grand Portage and at Fort Charlotte as well as the nine-mile portage trail that connects the two.

Grand Portage National Monument lies entirely within the Grand Portage Indian Reservation in Cook county, Minnesota, within a few miles of the north^{east}~~west~~ tip of the state.

Although the original virgin forests the voyageurs knew have long since been cut, the Grand Portage passes through dense, second-growth woodland, showing no evidence of human habitation. Thus, the traveler who follows the old trail sees it much as it must have been two centuries ago.

The reconstructed structures that remain at Grand Portage National Monument represent only a small percentage of the buildings that once occupied the site of the fur emporium of the North West Company and its competitors. Most of the structures which once existed at Grand Portage were built in the French 'poteaux sur sole' or post-on-sill type of construction, at times referred to as the Canadian style or Canadian frame construction.

The following reconstructions of historic structures and one late-period historic building exist at Grand Portage:

HS 1 GREAT HALL - This reconstruction replaces a previous one which was built in 1939-1940 and later burned. The fire, though it destroyed many artifacts, provided a fresh opportunity to rebuild the Great Hall in a more accurate manner. The present Grand Hall was reconstructed during 1971-1972 with a number of its features substantiated by excavations. Constructed from square logs, hand hewn from local timbers; the structure measures 30' x 95'. It is 1½ stories with two fireplaces of random-coursed fieldstone, a hip roof with six gable dormers covering the Great Hall and its 95' long porch located on the south side. This structure is in excellent condition.

HS 2 CRAWFORD CABIN - This cabin was built circa 1895 on the former site of the Grand Portage post. It measures 26' x 16', with 1½ stories. It is a dovetail constructed log building. New flooring and a safety disappearing stairway were installed in 1973. New wiring was installed in 1974. This structure is in fair condition.

HS 8 GATEHOUSE - A 13' x 13' building elevated approximately 12' above grade, this log gate house was built circa 1936. It is in excellent condition, although partially charred by fire in 1969.

HS 14 WAREHOUSE - A squared log building 52' x 19' set on piles, this reconstruction was completed in 1973 and is in excellent condition. It is now used as a canoe shed for interpretive purposes.

HS 15 KITCHEN - This building served as a kitchen for the main dining facilities in the Great Hall. Reconstructed between 1973 and 1976, it was based on a previous reconstruction built in 1936 which burned. The structure measures 35' x 27' and is connected by a walkway to the Great Hall. It is of log construction and is 1½ stories tall.

(See continuation sheet, page no. 1)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1936, the Grand Portage site was judged by the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings and Monuments to be of national significance because of its important association with the fur trade and the exploration and colonization of the northwest, its historic/geographic link between the United States and Canada, and its excellent state of preservation in a semi-wilderness setting.

Grand Portage National Monument is situated on Lake Superior near the northeastern tip of Lake Superior. It encompasses the site of one of the most important fur posts on the North American continent. Geography, the quest for fur, the search for the Northwest Passage, and a boundary dispute between the United States and Canada, caused it to become a great center of activity. The strategic location of Grand Portage between Lake Superior and the interconnected waterway along the present Minnesota-Ontario border guaranteed it an important place in history, because it guarded one of the best natural routes to the northern interior of the continent (the other being Hudson Bay). Because of its geographical advantages, Grand Portage was selected as the headquarters of the North West Company, a powerful British fur trading firm. Because of the importance of the company, Grand Portage was the only scene of military activity in Minnesota during the Revolutionary War when British soldiers were stationed there to protect the company's property.

The Grand Portage, or the "great carrying place," though neither the longest, the most difficult, nor the most spectacular of the portages, was a vital link in the fur trade from Montreal. This nine-mile trail represented the end of travel on the Great Lakes and the beginning of the interior river and lake route.

By 1778, the North West Company's trading post, located on the shores of the small bay at the eastern end of the "great carrying place," was in operation. This post, which took its name from the portage, served as the company's inland headquarters, and it was here that the "Nor' Westers" held their summer rendezvous.

At the peak of the North West Company's trade, there were over a thousand voyageurs in the company's service. These faithful laborers usually carried two, 90-pound packs over the portage between Fort Charlotte and Grand Portage, each trip.

The North West Company was unable to maintain a complete monopoly over the trade that passed through Grand Portage. Rivals sprang up from time to time, usually to flourish a few years and then merge with the "Nor' Westers." The most aggressive competitor, the XY Company, operated neighboring posts at Grand Portage and Fort Charlotte from 1797 to 1804.

(See continuation sheet, page no. 2)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Beeson, Dr. L., Research Material on Grand Portage, 1960.

Fridley, R. W., The Story of Grand Portage, prepared for the National Park Service, October 30, 1963.

Thompson, E. N., Grand Portage, A History of the Sites, People, and Fur Trade, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, June, 1969. (See cont. sht. P. 3)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 709.97

(See continuation sheet, page no. 4)

UTM REFERENCES GRAND PORTAGE POST

A 1,6 2,9,9 4,0,0 5,3 1,5 0,0,0
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
C 1,6 2,9,9 1,8,0 5,3 1,5 7,5,0

E.16 3 0 0 0 6 0 5 3 1 5 6 2 0
B 1,6 2,9,9 1,3,0 5,3 1,5 0,0,0
ZONE EASTING NORTHING
D 1,6 3,0,0 0,6,0 5,3 1,5 7,3,0

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

At a point which is 330 meters south and 400 meters east of the intersection of sections 4, 5, 8, and 9 in Township 63N Range 6E, the area of Grand Portage National Monument which surrounds the site of the old North West Company's headquarters begins. From this point the park property runs west 260 meters, north 140 meters, east 80 meters, north once again for 390 meters, then east for 360 meters to the intersection of two roads. (See continuation sheet, page no. 4)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Thomas P. Busch, Historical Architect

ORGANIZATION

National Park Service

DATE

April 22, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1709 Jackson Street

TELEPHONE

402-221-3423

CITY OR TOWN

Omaha

STATE

Nebraska

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ☒ National ☐ State ☐ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

Deputy Assistant Secretary

DATE JUN 8 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DATE

9/14/77
9/12/77

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED 10.15.66

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

HS 16 STOCKADE - There are 1574 linear feet of stockade, approximately 14' high. This reconstruction was first built in 1936 and rebuilt in 1964. The condition of the stockade varies from excellent to fair. It consists of logs standing in a filled trench.

HS 17 DOCK - The present 270' long wood dock is built on the site of the historic Grand Portage dock used in conjunction with the stockade. A previous dock constructed on the same site was destroyed by a storm in 1951 and was replaced by the present dock which is placed on 12' x 12' log cribs filled with loose rubble and is in the shape of an "L". It remains in excellent condition. This dock is used as a drop-off point for visitors travelling to and from Isle Royale National Park located in Lake Superior.

HS 18 FORT CHARLOTTE SITE - This site is located on the Pigeon River at the western end of the Grand Portage trail. A few buried foundations and caved-in cellar pits mark the location of the Fort Charlotte storage depot of the North West Company. Similar remains of a short-lived outpost set up by the competing XY Company in 1797 are also evident in this area.

PORTAGE TRAIL - The nine-mile Grand Portage or "great carrying place" connected the Pigeon River and Lake Superior. The trail was used by the voyageurs, making their way to the Grand Portage Stockade, to bypass the treacherous falls and cascades of the lower Pigeon River. The trail, an unpaved foot path, passes through a dense, second growth woodland and mountainous terrain.

Two watchtowers (HS 3) once existed on the Grand Portage site. Reconstructions built in 1936 were demolished in the 1960s, due to safety problems and historical inaccuracies.

Grand Portage National Monument also includes numerous other sites of structures built in the late 18th Century by the North West Company and its competitors. Further archeological exploration is required in these locations.

One nonhistoric structure which exists within the monument's boundaries is a public restroom which is located outside the stockade at the Grand Portage post.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

By 1800 the boom years of Grand Portage were near an end. In that year a United States tax collector visited the North West Company's post and gave notice that the United States would, the next year, levy duties on all merchandise and furs passing over the portage. x

The "Nor' Westers" like many others, were uncertain whether the portage lay on United States or Canadian soil. Because they thought that the collector had a good case in the Jay Treaty of 1794 and that his warnings should be taken seriously, they immediately made plans to move their post to the mouth of the Kaministiquia River on Canadian soil, about 30 miles northeast, and to reopen a long abandoned and more difficult route to the west.

By 1803, the new post--first named Fort Kaministiquia and later called Fort William in honor of the company's chief superintendent, William McGillivray--was near completion, and the North West Company bade a final farewell to Grand Portage.

Although the trapping regions and trade routes principally lay in Canada, the people and events of Grand Portage were also significant in United States history. It could be said that Grand Portage played a larger part in the history of Canada than in that of the United States. But, in a larger context, it must be recognized that Grand Portage played a part in the historical development of both nations. The French explorers who used the portage knew no international boundary; they traveled into the Dakotas and the Illinois country, as well as through western Canada.

The Grand Portage trail was and still is an international road. Under the terms of the Webster-Ashburton Treaty of 1842 use of the trail remains free and open to this day to citizens of both the United States and Great Britain.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 3

Master Plan for Grand Portage, U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service,
June, 1971.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 4

FORT CHARLOTTE

~~EE~~ ~~AA~~ 16 289080 5320550 ~~AA~~ ~~BB~~ 16 289400 5320540
~~BB~~ ~~CC~~ 16 289380 5319740 ~~CC~~ ~~DD~~ 16 288660 5319770
~~DD~~ ~~EE~~ 16 288680 5319920

GRAND PORTAGE TRAIL

AAA 16 289390 5320160 BBB 16 291000 5320200
CCC 16 293000 5319880 DDD 16 295000 5319800
EEE 16 297000 5318880 FFF 16 299000 5317200
GGG 16 299790 5315520
690 740

Verbal Boundary Description

Here the boundary travels north for 190 meters, east for 30 meters, north again for 40 meters, then east for 400 meters and then south 550 meters to the shore of Lake Superior. At this point the boundary follows the shoreline in a southwesterly direction to the point where it began.

The portion of Grand Portage National Monument which surrounds Fort Charlotte borders Canada and lies in the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 29, Township 64N, Range 5E.

The Park's property also includes the Grand Portage Trail which runs from Lake Superior to the Pigeon River. This trail is protected within a strip of land 100 feet wide, for about a mile, from Grand Portage village to U.S. 61 and is 600 feet in width the remainder of the way to Fort Charlotte.

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10.15.66

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

for Keeper *Helene Lyne*
1/19/89

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Section number _____ Page _____

**Note: These changes apply to
Grand Portage National Monument in
Cook County, Minnesota.**

REFERENCE NUMBER: 66000111

STATE: MINNESOTA

COUNTY: Cook

RESOURCE NAME (HISTORIC):

CITY:

VICINITY OF: Grand Marais

ADDRESS: off U. S. Hwy. 61

CERTIFICATION DATE:

REMOVED DATE:

COMMENTS:

Nina M. Archabal

Nina M. Archabal
State Historic Preservation Officer

JUN 17 1988

Date